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THE CHRISTIAN PILOT,

AND

GOSPEL MORALIST.

EDITED BY GEORGE HARRIS.

DECEMBER, 1850.

CONTENTS.

Church of Englandism, No. XII., Interference of Governments in Religious Matters Antichristian 529
Lines on the Death of the Rev. R. K. Philp..... 535
The Parables of Christ, Lecture XII., The Wedding Guest; Feast of the Poor; Great Supper 536
Religious Services; the Athenian Principle..... 545
What is the Principle of Harmony, in a System of General Education in the midst of numerous Sects and Parties?..... 549
Reformation from Popery; what is it?..... 550
Protestant and Papal Aggression..... 551
Work-a-Day Hymns, No. XII., by Joseph Dare 556

REGISTER; RELIGIOUS AND PHILANTHROPIC:—
Western Unitarian Christian Union 557
Projected Unitarian Christian Meeting House, Girvan, Ayrshire; Subscription List 558
Obituary, Mrs. William Morison, of Glasgow..... 560
Editor's closing Address 561

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CONTENTS:

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THE CHRISTIAN PILOT,

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GOSPEL MORALIST.

No. 23. DECEMBER, 1850. VOL. II.

CHURCH OF ENGLANDISM.

No. XII.

INTERFERENCE OF GOVERNMENTS IN RELIGIOUS MATTERS ANTICHRISTIAN.

(*Concluded from page* 485.)

THE valuable truth, which we endeavoured to illustrate in our last paper, may be reached by sundry other paths :—

It is related, in the 10th chapter of the Gospel of Mark, beginning at the 35th verse, that the brothers James and John (who, like all the Jews of that age, expected in the Messiah a temporal ruler, who would establish a visible throne in Jerusalem, and make Palestine the chief among the kingdoms of the world,) once came to Jesus with the ambitious request, that he would give to them the two chief offices of the state, when he should have established his sovereignty. When the other Apostles heard what the sons of Zebedee had been foolishly and ignorantly seeking, they were irritated that the two brothers should have sought to be exalted above the rest, and, as a consequence, to possess rule and dominion over them. Jesus, having observed their very natural and justifiable resentment, called the whole of the Twelve together; and, as we learn from the 42nd verse, addressed them in these significant and instructive words, (we quote the translation of the late Mr. Edgar Taylor): "Ye know that they who rule over the Gentiles, lord it over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them; *but it shall not be so among you;* but whosoever would be great among you shall be your Minister,

and whosoever would be the chief among you shall be the servant of all." Our great Teacher cannot be understood as forbidding any Christian to exercise lawful authority over others in *Civil* matters, and therefore to decline such offices as those of magistrate, judge, legislator, or monarch, for that would either have thrown all government into the hands of the Heathen, and kept it there for ever, or made such a thing as a well constituted kingdom impossible, and, moreover, have contradicted his other command to "render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's," and its necessary consequences. When, therefore, he so emphatically prohibits one Christian from "lording it over" the brethren, he must mean in *Religious* matters. In fact, this text may be considered as a parallel to that contained in Matt. xxiii. 9, 10, "Call no man your father upon earth," [regard no human being, submit to no human being, as your spiritual ruler] "for one" [*i.e.* one only] "is your Father, who is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters," [seek not *yourselves* to maintain any spiritual rule, or any rule in spiritual matters, above others] "for one is your Master, even Christ;" "and" [to add here what had been said a little before] "all ye are brethren;" all ye are, in spiritual privileges, upon a ground of the most perfect equality.

Kings, and Peers, and Representatives do not cease to be *Christians* when they assume these high and responsible offices; and not only so, but they are bound, as we mentioned in the beginning of our last paper, to carry their Christianity ever with them; and, in the discharge of public, as of private duties, to be animated and guided by its teachings. Yet, when they attempt to legislate for religious opinion, they evidently act in direct opposition to these plain and decisive teachings of the Messiah. They strive to compel others to acknowledge spiritual "fathers" on earth; they strive to become spiritual "masters" themselves; by patronizing one form of belief, they discountenance, and disparage, and prevent the wider extension of, all others; and thus "lord it over" all who dissent. If they do not now force us, by the stake, and the rack, and the dungeon, to conform, they exert every other power which the humaner

spirit of the age will permit. They disturb and destroy the equality which the Lord himself established among all his sincere followers, and exalt one portion of believers while they proportionably depress another. Although expressly and authoratively told, "it shall not be so among you," they imitate, in this respect, the conduct of the Gentiles ; so that their interference is essentially heathen, and against the wish, will, and command of the Son of God.

Perhaps the most important precept of the Gospel, bestowed upon us for the regulation of *all* our behaviour towards *all* our fellow-creatures, is that preserved to us in the vii. chap. of the Gospel of Matthew, at the 12th verse, "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them ; for this is the law and the prophets." We are acquainted with no rule capable of a wider or more beneficent application. It is the safe guide to the performance of all household duties, so that its observance alone would cause love to be the centre, and peace the circumference of every domestic circle. In social life, as distinguished from that of home, in the company of those whose presence we seek for interchanges of kindly feeling, for mutual improvement, or for lawful enjoyment, its habitual presence would have equal efficacy to solace and to bless. In affairs of traffic, constant obedience to its requirements would maintain our characters unspotted, and transform the business of commerce, from being too often an attempt to over-reach, into an equitable reciprocation of benefits and advantages. In endeavouring to discharge the duties which every man from his position necessarily owes to his fellow-citizens, no direction for conduct could be given so easy to be understood and applied, or so beneficial in its results. In the large concerns of nations and of governments, it is as susceptible of guiding, and as sure to be productive of good and just consequences, as when it regulates the demeanour of a husband to his wife, or a mother to her child. Oh ! if it had but been, in past years, the principle on which all our legislation was framed, how speedily would many of our national evils and crimes have been obliterated and abolished ! Slavery would not have existed *so long* in our West Indian

islands; Dissenters would not *so long* have been excluded from their civil franchises; our Roman Catholic fellow-subjects would not *so long* have had their claims for freedom unrecognized; one class would not *so long* have possessed a monopoly of the grand necessary of life; the Jews would not have remained to this hour with the gates of the Constitution closed in their faces; and, let us add, one favoured sect in Religion would not, at the present moment, be suffered to exist in pride, pomp, and power, maintained by forced exactions from those who conscientiously repudiate its doctrines, or eschew its ministrations.

Who can doubt that the preference, and especially the exclusive maintainance, of any one denomination by the Civil Power, is a violation of the golden rule, "Do unto others as ye would that they should do unto you?" We have but to suppose that the Monarch and the Lords and Commons decided once more, as they did four or five times in the past history of our country, to change the Religion of the land, and to make, what it was before, the Church of Rome the Established Church of the Empire. Romish bishops inherit the titles, and the salaries, and the palaces, and the seats in Parliament; Romish priests are installed in all the fat Rectories; tithes are paid to the Romish clergy; Romish chapels are erected, repaired, or adorned, by a tax levied on all "true Protestants;" invocations to the Virgin procure appointments in the Army and Navy; Transubstantiation qualifies for dignities and emoluments; and a belief in Purgatory conducts to the Paradise of pension and of place! Who would be loudest in their exclamations, most indignant in their protests, most active in their agitation, most determined in their resistance, against such a state of things? In all probability the members, both clerical and laic, of *that very body* which now rejoices in the smiles of our Rulers. And can they not see that the inequality, the injustice, the iniquity, the tyranny, the impiety, which they would, in such a case, visit with their loudest denunciations, are the very same, as regards all classes of Dissenters, when *their* Church is the favoured one? We verily believe they cannot; for if you write the word JUST, however plainly,

and then place a piece of gold over it, the gold prevents you from discerning the just. So it is ever, that, even with good men, interest and self prevent their seeing clearly their full duty to their neighbours. It was because our Saviour, who "knew what was in man," was well acquainted with this infirmity of our nature, that he gave the admirable advice, "Change places in imagination with your brother; get exactly into his position and feelings; and, whatever you would *then* sincerely and honestly wish him to do to you, do you *now* so to him." The interference of the Magistrate in Religion is intensely at variance with this great precept; and, therefore, with that Gospel, of whose morality it is so large a portion.

It seems to be almost a work of supererogation to argue this question, when we consider, that, for the first three hundred years of its being, Christianity could only advance, nay, could only exist, by a constant opposition to Established Churches, and by a constant denial of the right of Rulers and Princes to reign in the province of Religion. Did not Peter, and John, and all the Apostles, preach the Messiahship and Resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth in Jerusalem, contrary to the warnings, the threats, the punishments, of the Sanhedrim; the regularly constituted representatives of a Church established in Judea for centuries upon centuries? Did not Paul, at Lystra, at Phillippi, at Thessalonica, at Ephesus, at Athens, and ultimately at Rome, contrary to the wishes and decrees of the Kings, Governors, Nobles, and Priests of all these places, seek to turn the people from the worship he found established, to the pure and benignant principles of the Gospel of Christ? Yet, if the Civil Power has lawful authority to decide and to prescribe in theology, why did Paul act, nay not only act, but habitually *live*, in direct opposition to lawful authority, and encourage hundreds and thousands to do likewise?

Nay! did not Jesus himself contemplate and foresee such a course of conduct for his first followers? Did he not warn his friends that they should be "brought before Kings and Rulers for his name's sake?" When there, did he intend they should *not* bear testimony in favour of his religion, which, be it well remembered, then included,

in every case, bearing testimony *against* the established religion? On the contrary, he had previously told them, "What ye hear in the ear that proclaim ye upon the house-tops;" and still more emphatically, "Whosoever denieth me before men, him will I also deny before my Father who is in heaven." If Jesus, therefore, *knew* that his disciples would be arraigned before earthly Monarchs and Potentates; and if he instructed them to testify openly, boldly, fearlessly, even unto bonds, dungeons, scourgings, and death, against the modes of faith and forms of worship, patronized and protected by these Monarchs and Potentates; can we ask a stronger declaration of his views, that the Civil Power, when it legislated for Conscience, had *not* the sanction of heaven on its legislation?

But this "confessing Christ," which was made so imperative, at all hazards of freedom, or even of life, on the first believers, is it not equally imperative on us? And what is it to "confess Christ?" Is it not to confess *what each of us really thinks in his heart to be true respecting Christ*, his nature, his office, his work, his doctrines, his precepts, and the kind of adoration he has enjoined us to offer to the Father? Is it not, therefore, the solemn duty of each of us to "confess" (that is, openly to avow and maintain,) our individual convictions on these great topics? If, in these, or any of them, we differ from what the Government has enjoined to be believed or practised, is it not still our duty to lift up our testimony, to repudiate and to disobey? If so, and if that cannot be morally right, which the consciences of good men lead them to withstand, we have reached the old conclusion by another road still, that Secular Dictation in concerns of Faith is at hostility to the mind and spirit of God's Anointed.

Let us, then, be persuaded that the Gospel we all receive, and profess to be desirous to advance, is a religion of spirituality and of love; and requires, neither for its present maintenance, nor for its further dissemination, any means or appliances which are uncongenial or unsympathetic with these divine characteristics. Arguments presented to the Reason, that great lineament of God impressed upon humanity; calls to the Heart, and its

best, purest, and holiest affections; addresses to the Conscience the moral sense of right and wrong implanted within us; appeals to the Instinct in our nature, which tells there is above us a Being greater than the universe, and before us something more exquisite than the present life; these are all the weapons, forces, and powers which Christianity permits to be used in her warfare, and all that are needful to make her progress rapid and triumphant. During the first ages she advanced more prosperously and gloriously *against* all the might of Sovereigns, than ever she has done since she received their selfish, and deceitful, and contaminating aid. Oh! that they would all withdraw their patronage, which cumbers and defiles, where it professes to assist and honour! Then would the religion of Jesus prove itself indeed a "kingdom not of this world;" then would it appear in its pristine and intrinsic beauty, as it did to the first believers; and then would it promote the great object of its Bestower, "peace on earth, and good will to men."

Canterbury. R. E. B. M.

ON THE DEATH OF THE REV. R. K. PHILP, AUGUST 27, 1850.

[A notice of the decease of this truly excellent Man, with a brief sketch of his life and character, appeared in the *Christian Pilot* for October, pp. 475—480.—EDITOR.]

How lovely is the smile of infancy,
When the young soul, fresh from its Maker's hand,
Looks with awakening intellect around;
But a more holy interest is felt
When the grey hair, as with a halo, decks
The placid brow of aged righteousness.
Servant of God and follower of Christ,
Thou wert his true Apostle; thou didst sit
With meek humility at thy Lord's feet,
Drinking with eager thirst the living stream,
Brought by our Master from that fount of Love,
O'erflowing and unpurchased, near God's throne.
A living stream it was indeed to thee,

Such life as would not rest in cherishing *self*,
Such active life as must go forth to preach
The Gospel to thy poor neglected brethren.
"First Missionary to the untaught poor;"
O glorious title! When oblivion blots
Monarchs and Conquerors from the rolls of fame,
Thy record shall remain in grateful hearts;
And through the ages of eternity,
In the blest company of happy spirits,
How warm shall be the greeting that awaits thee,
When thou shalt meet those thou didst lead to God.
The hoary head is crowned indeed with glory,
When every day in the long life is marked
By some kind act, some holy generous deed;
And the "good servant" who improved his talent,
Rests not in selfish indolence in heaven:
That Father whom he honoured on the earth,
Will find him honourable work to do
Within the boundless realms of time and space.

Northiam. JANE ASHBY.

THE PARABLES OF CHRIST.

LECTURE XII.

The Wedding Guest—LUKE XIV. 7—11; *The Feast of the Poor*—LUKE XIV. 12—14; *The Great Supper*—LUKE XIV. 16—24.

THE religion of Jesus Christ is purely a social religion; and some of his most striking parables are taken from scenes of festivity and joy. Nor did he think it inconsistent with his duty or high office, to give directions for proper decorum on such occasions. The following is an instance of this nature. It is the parable of *The Wedding Guest.*—Luke xiv. 7—11. "And he put forth a parable to those that were bidden," (that is, to a wedding), "when he marked how they chose out the chief rooms; saying unto them, when thou art bidden of any man to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room; lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him; and he that bade thee and him, come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin

with shame to take the lowest room. But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee. For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

This parable is to be considered, observes *Livermore*, as a "precept or direction." on choosing "chief rooms, that is, the highest places at table."

"There is much ceremony," *The Cottage Bible* tells us, "at an Eastern feast, in placing the several guests according to their rank; and MORIER, the Persian traveller, mentions an instance of a person who had taken a seat below his rank, being desired to move up higher."—See Orient. Lit., No. 1304.

"In this parable," says *Dr. Adam Clarke*, "our Lord only repeats advices which the Rabbins had given to their pupils, but were too proud to conform to themselves. Rabbi Akiba said 'Go two or three seats lower than the place that belongs to thee, and sit there till they say unto thee, *Go up higher;* but do not take the uppermost seat, lest they say unto thee, *Come down:* for it is better that they should say unto thee, *Go up, go up;* than that they should say, *Come down, come down.*'"—See *Schœttgen.*

Our Saviour was at this time in the house of one of the chief Pharisees, as a guest; and *Dr. Doddridge* says, "it is most probable that Christ himself, as illustrious a person as he was, had accordingly done thus, and *sat down* among them *in the lowest place* at the *table.*"

It is said, certainly, in another place, that "he made himself of no reputation." That is, he did not display any ostentatious demeanour, but always conducted himself with "lowliness of mind;" and "the same mind should be in us, which was also in him." Humility is the lesson taught in this parable, In the words of *Livermore*, "Jesus here appeals to motives of respectability; first, the shame of being degraded to a lower seat, and, next, the praise of being summoned to a higher one. The saying in Proverbs is here illustrated: 'Before honour is humility.'" And the concluding words of

Jesus are no less true, as a maxim well established by all history and experience.—"For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." It is so, by the natural course of Providence; and the feelings and sentiments of mankind bear testimony to its truth.

Our Saviour says on this occasion, "Then shalt thou have *worship* in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee;" v. 10. That is, *Then shalt thou have* RESPECT in their sight. Is not this clearly the meaning of Jesus Christ? And so we read of a servant falling down and worshipping his lord; of the people worshipping king David, as well as the LORD; and of Nebuchadnezzar worshipping Daniel. Thus worship is sometimes applied to human beings; and, therefore, does not always signify *religious adoration*: but sometimes *honour, veneration*, and *respect*. And whenever it is applied to any Messenger of God, however highly exalted he may be, it is always to be understood in this sense.

It is remarkable, that Jesus Christ was invited, on various occasions, to the houses of some of the most distinguished among the Pharisees; from what motives it does not appear. Perhaps with a view to know something more of him, to converse with him, to argue with him, or to puzzle him with captious questions, and to vanquish him in disputation. The fact, however, shows, that he was regarded as no ordinary character, and that he was popular with the people. He was at this time a guest of one of this peculiar class. On these occasions, he never lost sight of his great mission, as a Prophet of God, and the Saviour of the world. And after he had spoken as stated to those present, he addressed the host as follows:—"Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just," Luke xiv. 12—14.

In this parable of *The Feast of the Poor*, our Saviour's

benevolent disposition strikingly appears. He would not debar the rich from having festive entertainments among themselves; because he has on various occasions spoken of such with evident approbation; but he would not have the poor forgotten; on the contrary, he would have them regarded more particularly, as he had been anointed and sent to preach the Gospel to the poor. Probably Jesus might observe, on the part of the Pharisees, a disposition to make "magnificent feasts, (on sabbath days, and on other occasions,) and of treating great persons, chiefly out of pride, ambition, and ostentation; which might render this advice peculiarly proper, especially if he who now gave this entertainment, was, as many of his brethren certainly were, very deficient in works of charity."—See *Dr. Doddridge's Expositor.*

There is a note in the *Cottage Bible* on this parable, from *Oriental Customs*, No. 450, to the following effect:—Dr. Pococke mentions, that in the East they sometimes admit the poor to their tables. In his account of an entertainment made by an Egyptian magistrate, each, when he had done eating, retired, and others in succession came, till at last the *poor* came, and 'eat up all.' The Arabs also, when they kill a sheep, dress the whole, and call in their neighbours and the poor, till all is consumed; for they never set by meat that has been brought to table. Thus the sequel of the parable is quite in harmony with Oriental manners." "The same author also mentions what is still more surprising; for in giving an account of the diet of the Eastern people, (p. 182,) he informs us, that an Arab prince will often dine in the street, before his door, and call to all that pass, even *beggars*, in the usual expression of Bismillah, that is, in the name of God, who come and sit down, and when they have done, retire with the usual form of returning thanks." (See *Burder's Oriental Customs*, vol. ii. p. 291.)

"The preceding parable," says *Livermore*, "was applied to the guests. This one was addressed to the host; *Call not thy Friends.* Jesus would teach, that there was no peculiar merit in entertaining one's friends, who, in due time, would return the favour, but that disinterested goodness consisted in benefitting the poor, who could not make any recompense. It was not his design

to prohibit the agreeable offices and intercourses of social life, but rather to condemn the show and pride of luxurious entertainments, and to inculcate, that charity is a duty far more obligatory than hospitality."

Dr. Adam Clarke also observes that "Our Lord certainly does not mean that a man should not entertain, at particular times, his friends, &c.; but what he inculcates here, is, *charity to the poor;* and what he condemns is, [are] those entertainments which are given to the *rich*, either to *flatter* them, or to procure a similar *return;* because the money that is thus criminally laid out, properly belongs to the poor."

The hospitality which our Saviour here enjoins, he pronounces *blessed;* or, that a blessing will attend it. It is disinterested; for the objects of it, those that thus freely and graciously enjoy it, cannot recompense the kind and friendly author. But he will be recompensed hereafter. "Because," says *Dr. Adam Clarke*, "he has done it for God's sake only, and they cannot make him a recompense, therefore God will consider himself his debtor, and will recompense him in the resurrection of the righteous." He has done it from the pure dictate of love, because God is love. And the love of God will be shed abroad through his heart. He has done it in sympathy with the Blessed Saviour, who went about doing good. Therefore will Jesus receive him hereafter with the gracious welcome, "Come thou blessed of my Father; inherit the kingdom prepared for thee from the foundation of the world. For inasmuch as thou hast done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, thou hast done it unto me." He will receive the approbation and the blessing of the God of love. The reward of charity will rest upon him. Pleasing recollections, and delightful emotions will fill his soul. As the promotion of happiness has been his pleasure upon earth, he will receive from it a greater capacity for the enjoyment of the bliss of heaven. His spirit will be in more perfect unison with that celestial love, which constitutes the blessedness of the realms of light. But may we not, with *Dr. Doddridge*, consider the words of our Saviour, as an "awakening intimation, that none who neglect works of charity shall have their final lot among the

righteous?" Is it not also "evident," as he again observes, "from the many hundred Scriptures, which indispensably require *mercy* as well as *justice?*" An excellent Poet very beautifully says:—"Heaven is all love; all joy in giving joy." How can *they* enter it, whose hearts are not imbued with love? How can *they* partake of its joys, who have no disposition to receive them, and to diffuse them among the blessed? So the saying is true, that "He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will He pay him again."

The pure benevolence taught by Jesus Christ in the preceding parable, could hardly fail to excite the admiration of some, at least, around him. And, accordingly, we are informed, that "when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God."

"That is," says *Livermore*, "partake of the honours and pleasures of the supposed temporal reign of the Messiah."

"This is spoken," says *Dr. Adam Clarke*, "in conformity to the general expectations of the Jews, who imagined that the kingdom of the Messiah should be of a wholly secular nature."

"It is well known," observes *Dr. Doddridge*, "that the phrase, *to eat bread*, signifies making a meal; and this not merely at a common table, but sometimes at a feast where the provision is very sumptuous." And blessed is that man, "happy indeed is he," continues the same writer, "who shall live in the time of the Messiah, and share the entertainments he will prepare for his people, when these virtues of humility, condescension, and charity shall flourish in all their glory."

The thoughts of Jesus, no doubt, at this moment, passed to the future; when, notwithstanding this fervent exclamation, and thousands perhaps of the like nature, many would make light of his blessings, and would reject and despise him. He therefore addressed to this individual, who thus gave utterance to his ardent feelings of approbation, the following parable of *The Great Supper*, Luke xiv. 16—24.

"Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great

supper, and bade many: and sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready. And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, 'I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused.' And another said 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused.' And another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' So that servant came and shewed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry, said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind. And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room. And the Lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. For I say unto you, that none of those men that were bidden shall taste of my supper."

Such is the parable of *The Great Supper*. It is in perfect accordance with the manners of the East, and identifies our Saviour with those regions, and those scenes, in which his history presents him to our view. It is another proof of the truth of his divine mission, and of his holy religion. He is here living and acting before us; and as he himself is real, so is all that he teaches us; for his all-perfect moral character is a voucher for all that he said and did.

Burder, in his *Oriental Customs*, says, in reference to this parable, "There is a striking conformity between the circumstances intimated in the introductory part of this parable, and the ceremonies attendant upon a Chinese entertainment. Amongst this people, 'An invitation to an entertainment is not supposed to be given with sincerity, until it has been *renewed three or four* times in writing. A card is sent on the evening before the entertainment; another on the *morning* of the appointed day; and *a third when everything is prepared*,' (Goldsmith's *Geography*, p. 177). 'When all is to be done quite accurately and solemnly, the entertainment must be preceded by three invitations, which are made by tittee or cards, which the host sends to his guests.

The first invitation is made the day before the feast, or two days before; but that is seldom the case. The other is made on the morning of the feast-day, by which the guests are reminded of the invitation they have received, and are again entreated to come. Lastly, the third invitation follows, when all is ready; which is likewise made by cards, which the host sends by his servant, to inform his guests that he expects them now with impatience,' (Du Halde's *Description of the Chinese Empire*, part ii., p. 133). The invitation to this *Great Supper* is supposed to have been given, when the *certain man* had resolved upon making it. But it is again repeated at *supper-time*, when all things were ready. Now, as it does not appear that the renewal of it arose from the refusal of the persons invited, of which no hint is yet given, we may suppose it was customary thus to send repeated messages. The practice was very ancient amongst the Chinese; and, if admitted to have prevailed amongst the Jews, certainly gives a significancy to the words not usually perceived," (See Burder's *Oriental Customs*, Vol. ii., pp. 291, 292). Where the following is also given, from Morier's *Journey through Persia*, p. 73:—"In the evening we dined with Mahomed Nebee Khan. We did not go till the Khan sent to the Envoy to say that the entertainment was ready for his reception, a custom always observed on such occasions."

So in this parable, observes *Livermore*, "As was usual, the guests had already been invited, had accepted the invitation, and promised to attend when notice was given. Hence the insult cast upon the master of the feast by afterwards refusing to come, when the summons was given, under the plea of various engagements."

Thus by this *Great Supper* in the parable, the Gospel is meant. By the master of the feast, we are to understand the Almighty Lord of heaven and earth. By the servant sent out to invite his guests, Jesus Christ, the messenger of the everlasting Covenant, is meant; and through him, after his ascension, the Apostles are to be understood.

The Jews are those that were first bidden. And their "unbelief and obstinacy," says *Livermore*, "in not coming to the Gospel feast of Christ, are here portrayed, and

the readiness with which they excused themselves from accepting the terms of salvation. There was no positive Sin in the affairs which detained many of them from the spiritual entertainment, but the guilt consisted in allowing these inferior matters an ascendancy over the supreme and all-glorious interest."

Thus also *Doddridge* says. "They were lawful occasions which these unhappy people pleaded as their excuse for neglecting the invitation. And," he adds, "how many perish by what is indeed lawful! But the care of our estates or cattle, our domestic affairs, and our dearest relatives, will be destructive to us, if they be minded as our main care, and our hearts be so attentive to them as to forget the one thing needful."

The Gentiles are those that were the second bidden. And history informs us that these two different classes acted in the manner described by this parable. As the Jews rejected the Gospel, so the Gentiles received it with gladness. They were not, strictly speaking, *compelled* to come in. They were prevailed upon, they were persuaded, they were constrained to come in, by reason and argument, which they could not resist. And when a person cannot resist evidence, he is compelled by it to believe; especially if he has hitherto been hard of belief, and has opposed himself against it. And it is not unfrequently the case, that persons are thus compelled to assent to a particular opinion. They cannot help it; they are driven to it, they say. Or have been as though they were driven to it. The evidence has been too strong for them; and they have at length been compelled to believe. Besides, again observes *Livermore*, "the preachers were endued with wisdom and power from on high;" and they "constrained their hearers by the strongest moral obligation and necessity, to comply with the invitations of Divine mercy." Their weapons were not carnal, but spiritual. Jesus Christ used no other kind, and he recommended no other. Reason and argument, persuasion and love, were the only constraints which he and his Apostles employed. He certainly foresaw that men would so far mistake or pervert his meaning, as to use compulsion in the strictest and most literal sense; that "the time would come when they who would kill

his disciples would think that they did God service." But he added, "these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me." And "by this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one for another." Violence and force are anti-Christian and sinful; and not less so the coercing of conscience. That should be kept perfectly free, perfectly sacred to God. And it would be well, if all rulers, and all Christian professors, were to remember the words of "the great and amiable *Fenelon*, in his '*Directions for the Conscience of a King*:—Above all things never force your subjects to change their Religion. No human power can invade the impenetrable recesses of the human heart. Force can never convince men; it can only make them hypocrites. * * * Allow to all legal toleration, not in approving all as indifferent, but in suffering with forbearance that which God suffers, and in endeavouring to reclaim men by mild persuasion.'"—See *Cottage Bible.*

Let us show that our zeal is Christian, by displaying in it the spirit of love.

Finally, let us remember that we have received an invitation to *The Gospel Feast*, and that God is sending out his servants continually, from day to day, from year to year, and from age to age, to invite new guests. May none perish by making light of the Gospel! And may we not receive the grace of God in vain!

RELIGIOUS SERVICES: THE ATHENIAN PRINCIPLE.

What a waste of faculties and opportunities is suggested by the picture of the Athenian people, as presented by the sacred Historian, in the words, "All the Athenians and Strangers who were there, spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing." Health of body and the laws by which it is governed; the powers of the understanding, and the best means by which they can be exercised, the natural history of the lower animals; the history of the different nations of

mankind; the duties of Governors, of States, Individuals; of parents, brothers, husbands, neighbours, masters, servants; the existence and attributes of God; questions of this character we are inclined to think might have been studied with advantage by the lively, pleasure-loving, superstition-devoted, people of Athens. It is no desirable name which they have gained for themselves; while so much may be acquired and so much done, the Athenian people were satisfied to write their character on the page of history as delighting "in nothing else but either to hear, or to tell, some new thing."

What was said of the people of Athens, cannot be said with truth, of the people of any of our English towns at the present day: the inhabitants of this country are for the most part active, enterprising, diligent; and yet there is a common notion, that, with respect to attendance at places of Public Worship, the Athenian principle is the right one. Something new should be communicated, new either in matter or form, or there can be no benefit in attending such meetings.

The Athenians manifested a very low estimate of human life and duty, when they spent their time in hearing and telling mere news; and so do we manifest a very low estimate of the value of Public Religious Meetings, when the new things we are to hear or to tell at those meetings are our chief concern. The faithful follower of Jesus is animated by a spirit very different from that which would ever prompt a man to inquire for some new thing. Repentance, faith, holiness, hope, charity, are subjects familiar to the Christian. On these he often meditates; on these he is glad to hear others speak; not unwilling, on suitable occasions, to offer his own thoughts. God's Love to the human race manifested in Christ Jesus; faith working by love, reconciliation to the everlasting Father, conversion from sin to holiness, in Scripture language from darkness to light, from Satan to God; the forgiveness and remission of sin; brotherly kindness, love of enemies, overcoming evil with good; righteousness, temperance, and a judgment to come; these are subjects which can never be uninteresting to the true Christrian, to him they will be ever welcome as the countenance of a dear friend.

We come into life on much too serious a business, and Jesus of Nazareth was sent on far too serious an errand, for any follower of his to make religion a matter of merely idle curiosity. If God, the everliving Ruler of the Universe, the Father of all the families of men, is seeking for spiritual worshippers, can I too often strive to offer a spiritual worship? If Jesus is appointed to be the Way, the Truth, and the Life, can I think too frequently of his character, or hear too often of his example? He came to seek and to save the lost: is my way so clear, and has my duty been always so well done, that he can be no Saviour to me, and it is but a waste of time to hear frequent mention made of him? Life is a trial of our weakness and our virtue; home sees it, business sees it, pleasure sees it, friends see it, enemies see it, prosperity tries us, disappointment tries us. And when I enter the house of prayer, shall I desire all these great matters to be dismissed from my mind, and impatient of their consideration, seek to have my fancy amused with "some new thing?"

When, after some absence, we return to the homes of our childhood, and scenes once familiar to our daily lives, are we anxious to see new forms, or to hear the speech of strangers? Do we not rather wish to see some old, well-remembered countenances, and to hear voices heard long before? And thus, too, if we enter the House of Prayer in a right spirit, we shall not be anxious to hear something new; God, his attributes and providence; Man, his faculties and duties; Life, its trials and joys; Jesus, his mission, precepts, example; Death, Resurrection; Judgment, eternity; subjects no longer new, often considered, ever interesting, will abundantly satisfy our thoughts.

The slave-holding, pleasure-seeking people of Athens expected to hear something new from Paul, and in that they were not disappointed; and so there are many classes of men who would hear, in the ordinary services of the House of Prayer, much that would be new to them. The young would hear of their duty to their parents, employers, companions, all with whom they have to do. Let a man of a worldly, money-seeking spirit, grasping at everything, giving nothing, his heart seldom touched

by any calamity which others endure, be led to enter the House of Prayer and hear there that Life is a scene of duty, that all are learners, that money is but a means of living, that the life is more than meat, and the body more than raiment; that it is our duty to love our neighbours as ourselves, and according to our means to minister to the real necessities of others; all this would be new to the mere earthworm, and if received in a right spirit, remembered and acted on, would tend to make him a new man—"Old things for him would pass away, all things would become new."

Let one who has been for a long time running deeply into Sin, be led by curiosity or persuasion to enter the House of Prayer. He has been living, as much as possible, without God in the world, a bad husband, a bad father, a forgetful son, an unprincipled citizen; he joins an assembly of worshipping Christians, and hears that the things which are seen are temporal, and will speedily pass away; that the things which are not seen are eternal; he hears that to one are given five talents, to another two, to another one; that opportunities of exercising those talents are daily afforded, and that a good and wise Judge, whom no pretence or concealment can deceive, is prepared to render to every one according to his deeds; he hears also that the Creator wishes to be regarded as a Father, who graciously calls upon all who have forsaken his way to return; he finds that God is ever calling by many messengers, sometimes by kindness, sometimes by severity; he finds the Everlasting Father is represented as dealing with his repentant children as an earthly parent treats one of his family, over whose follies and prodigality he has long mourned, but whose return to a better kind of life he hails with the deepest joy. Thus will the man who has long been sunk in Sin, find in the ordinary services of the House of Prayer, much that appeals to his feelings, much to soothe his troubled spirit, much of consolation, encouragement, and direction that to him is new.

But the mature Christian will be more anxious as to the frame of mind in which he attends the public meetings, than as to the new things he may hear or tell there; he will not think some short time misspent that is de-

voted to meditation and private prayer, before he joins his fellow-worshippers in their public place of meeting. Partaker of many of the mercies of God, he will cast aside the Athenian spirit, which is ever clamouring for some new thing, and will rather give heed to those weightier, though well-known matters, justice, temperance, faith, hope, charity, love, reverence, gratitude; God's providence and faithfulness; Christ's divine teachings, spirit, Resurrection; human life, duty, eternity.

Let Christians seek in this spirit, and they will find; let them thus knock and the door will be opened; their place of meeting, whether built with high arches and carved pillars, and ornamented by many arts, or but a lowly temple such as their forefathers delighted to rear, will witness to their rejoicing, improvement, piety, goodness, and be to them a gate of heaven.

F.

WHAT IS THE PRINCIPLE OF HARMONY IN A SYSTEM OF GENERAL EDUCATION, IN THE MIDST OF NUMEROUS SECTS AND PARTIES.

Is not this that principle? The Bible to be read in all the Schools, but without note or comment, without Formularies or Catechisms, Articles or Creeds of any kind whatever, without Headings of Chapters, by way of contents; the Bible read alone, when read, and speaking for itself? What Christians would not have sufficient confidence in it, if it thus spoke? Might it not, in may respects, speak best this way; more simply, more forcibly, more divinely? Might it not teach best this way, all that was really essential to know? Might it not inspire the mind with pure, unsophisticated truth, and adorn the mind with all the graces and beauty of simplicity? And if, in some cases, or even in many cases, the Scholars might wish to have certain difficulties solved, might they not get their parents to solve them at home, or their respective ministers to solve them, who would no doubt gladly aid them, whenever applied to for so good a purpose? And the Sunday Schools, which would be more religious Schools, would be very

serviceable, in many respects, in such cases. The mind would be thus trained to think, and think for itself. And it would grow up in a spirit of inquiry, and the free and fearless exercise of private judgment. But is not this the great principle of the British and Foreign School Society, but more strictly acted upon, and more faithfully carried out? For there would not only be no comment from the teacher, but no comment from any Headings or Contents of Chapters. When the Bible was used, it would be used alone. And I again ask, Where are the Christians who would not have perfect confidence in it; yes, more than human confidence; when speaking for itself? Would it not, moreover, be a sight most pleasing before God? And might not all humbly hope, that his divine blessing would rest upon it?

Not that the reading of the Bible should be a task, but a privilege from time to time granted. And then it would become a sacred privilege, and inspire the purest pleasure and delight.

I throw out this as a suggestion. And I beg to propose it for the serious consideration of those who love peace and harmony, as well as truth.

It seems to me to be a very painful, if not a very invidious position, for any young person to have to stand up in any of the supposed public Schools, and say to the teacher or teachers, "My father does not wish me to read the Bible." It presents to my mind a sad example, and appears not at all calculated to inculcate a love from early youth for the Scriptures. OBSERVER.

REFORMATION FROM POPERY, WHAT IS IT?

CERTAINLY our Reformation was never perfected, neither can it be until we all come openly to acknowledge it, and to act upon that principle, which was the only ground upon which the Reformation did, or could stand, namely, that the Scriptures are the only rule of faith to Christians, and that every Christian, as he has to answer to God for his own actions, and not others for him, so he is to judge for himself in matters of Religion, and not others to judge for him. Where this principle does not prevail, *there* popery still remains, though it passeth under the name of Protestantism. And till this principle does prevail, we can expect no completion of that Reformation, which, as yet, can only be said to have been happily begun among us.—*Bishop Burnett.*

PROTESTANT AND PAPAL AGGRESSION.

The assumptions of Ecclesiastical authority and power, which have been of late years put forth in Great Britain and Ireland, by portions of the Clergy of the Church of England, the Methodist Conference, and the Kirk of Scotland, whether known as Residuary or Free, are most instructive, as well as in an Age like the present, and a Country such as ours, most extraordinary. Whatever may be thought of their validity, or Scriptural character, they claim the serious consideration of every practical disciple of the Reformer and Saviour of the world. With infallible confidence, has it been affirmed by the Bishops and Clergy "of the Catholic Church in Great Britain and Ireland, sometimes styled the Episcopal Church," in their address to the people of their communion in Scotland, "The British and Irish Episcopal Church is the ancient Church of these countries, planted by the Apostles, or their immediate successors, and continuing in an unbroken line of divinely ordained Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, from the day of Pentecost, when ordination in the Christian Church began, till our own times. Her creeds, her worship, her formularies, are the same, and identical, throughout the eighteen centuries of her history."

The "*Tracts for the Times*," and other kindred publications, contain language, if possible, even more vaunting, of Church authority and pretension:—"To call ourselves Episcopalians, is to imply that we differ from the mass of Dissenters mainly in Church government and form, whereas the difference is that we are here, and they there. We in the Church, and they out of it." "Of these communities, whether collectively or individually considered, I affirm that they are no part of the Church of Christ." "Their separation from the Church of England was founded not only in schism, but in heresy, and this being the case, they could not have been any part of the Church, nor were they capable of forming Christian Churches." "We may be as sure that the Bishop is Christ's representative, as if we actually saw upon his head a cloven tongue, like as of fire. The Bishop rules the Church here below, as Christ rules it above." "Con-

sider the vastness of the power claimed by the Church, a power which places it almost on a level with God himself; the power of forgiving sins by wiping them out in baptism; the power of bringing down the Spirit of God from heaven, and incorporating it in the person of frail and fleshly man. Think, I say, of this stupendous power, and then ask, if any human being could dare to assume it without authority from God himself. If such authority has never been given, then the Church is guilty of the most frightful blasphemy that man can conceive. If it has been given, is it not a fearful thing to make light of, or dispute it?" The Clergy "have a commission from God Almighty, not only to preach the Gospel and administer the Sacraments, but to guide the Church." "He that despises them despises the Apostles." Honoured should they be "as those who are entrusted with the Keys of heaven and hell, as the heralds of mercy, the denouncers of woe to wicked men, and as entrusted with the awful and mysterious gift of making the bread and wine Christ's body and blood." What could Rome say more?

More recently, and in as pompous and inflated terms, instigated to the aggression probably, not more by its own inherent love of priestly rule, than by such declarations as these, and the crossings over to Rome, which have in numerous instances followed such enunciation of her principles, the Rival Church of the Papacy has put forth similar pretensions, and in the exercise of its Sovereign sacerdotal functions, has divided the fair territory of England into ecclesiastical patrimonies for its ghostly Fathers, and given our Country, after centuries of severance and exclusion, a place and a name again in its Book of the faithful.

But in so doing, the Isle has been well nigh frightened from its propriety. Guy Fawkes has revelled in more than his pristine blaze of faggot and cracker glory. Festive entertainments have resounded to infuriate, if not inebriate shouts of "Down with the Pope!" County, Town, and Village has had its meeting to uphold the Queen's supremacy, and denounce the Italian pretender to the right. The Bull of the Pope has been answered by the Premier Minister of State of England, and Down-

ing Street bids defiance to the Vatican. As an index of the feeling which has been excited, and the views which a Statesman takes of ecclesiastical controversy, we insert the letter of Lord John Russell to the Bishop of Durham :—

"My dear Lord,—I agree with you in considering 'the late aggression of the Pope upon our Protestantism,' as 'insolent and insidious,' and I therefore feel as indignant as you can do upon the subject.

I not only promoted to the utmost of my power the claims of the Roman Catholics to all civil rights, but I thought it right, and even desirable, that the ecclesiastical system of the Roman Catholics should be the means of giving instruction to the numerous Irish immigrants in London and elsewhere, who without such help would have been left in heathen ignorance.

This might have been done, however, without any such innovation as that which we have now seen.

It is impossible to confound the recent measures of the Pope, with the division of Scotland into dioceses by the Episcopal Church, or the arrangement of districts in England by the Wesleyan Conference.

There is an assumption of power in all the documents which have come from Rome, a pretension to supremacy over the realm of England, and a claim to sole and undivided sway, which is inconsistent with the Queen's supremacy, with the rights of our bishops and clergy, and with the spiritual independence of the nation as asserted even in Roman Catholic times.

I confess, however, that my alarm is not equal to my indignation.

Even if it shall appear that the ministers and servants of the Pope in this country have not transgressed the law, I feel persuaded that we are strong enough to repel any outward attacks. The liberty of Protestantism has been enjoyed too long in England to allow of any successful attempt to impose a foreign yoke upon our minds and consciences. No foreign prince or potentate will be permitted to fasten his fetters upon a Nation, which has so long and so nobly vindicated its right to freedom of opinion, civil, political, and religious.

Upon this subject, then, I will only say that the present state of the law shall be carefully examined, and the propriety of adopting any proceedings with reference to the recent assumptions of power, deliberately considered.

There is danger, however, which alarms me much more than any aggression of a foreign Sovereign.

Clergymen of our own Church, who have subscribed the Thirty-nine Articles, and acknowledged in explicit terms the Queen's supremacy, have been the most forward in leading their flocks, 'step by step, to the very verge of the precipice.' The honour paid to saints, the claim of infallibility for the Church, the superstitious use of the sign of the cross, the muttering of

the Liturgy so as to disguise the language in which it is written, the recommendation of auricular confession, and the administration of penance and absolution, all these things are pointed out by clergymen of the Church of England as worthy of adoption, and are now openly reprehended by the Bishop of London in his charge to the clergy of his diocese.

What, then, is the danger to be apprehended from a foreign prince of no great power, compared to the danger within the gates from the unworthy sons of the Church of England herself?

I have little hope that the propounders and framers of these innovations will desist from their insidious course. But I rely with confidence on the people of England, and I will not bate a jot of heart or hope so long as the glorious principles and the immortal martyrs of the Reformation shall be held in reverence by the great mass of a Nation, which looks with contempt on the mummeries of superstition, and with scorn at the laborious endeavours which are now making to confine the intellect and enslave the soul. I remain, with great respect, &c.,

Downing-street, Nov. 4. J. RUSSELL."

In the midst of the turmoil which has been occasioned by the appointment of an Archbishop of Westminster by the Pope, much has been said, and shouted about the Church, and the Church; little has been affirmed respecting Protestantism, and less of that invasion of individual right which all Church authority, all assumed Supremacy, be it lodged where it may, necessarily involves. Amidst the brawl, Christian principle, the actual constitution and practice of the primitive Churches of the Cross, are likely, we fear, to be lost sight of, and altogether set at nought. May it not be, also, that the Civil and Religious Liberties of the denounced adherents of Rome, may be jeopardized by the angry howl of intolerance, indignation and alarm, excited by pretensions as preposterous as they are anti-Christian? If so, if there be any attempt to revive penalties on opinion, any trenching on the sacred rights of conscience, strenuous and firm must be the protest against such violations of Christian principle and civil equality. The flagitious conduct manifested at the Islington *Protestant* meeting, so called, where the Editor of the *Nonconformist* was in personal danger, through the reckless brutality of Clergymen of the Church of England, because he desired to express his individual opinion, gave proof that they were as ignorant of the genuine principles of freedom, as the Papacy they had

assembled to denounce. Dissent would fare as ill with such men as these, if power were theirs, as heresy in the dungeons of the Inquisition.

Alarm we have none, as against the Papal aggression; and the moral indignation excited against priestcraft in the mind of every Christian freeman, will not be entertained in relation to Rome only, but in respect to all of every Church who would attempt to impose their "yoke upon our minds and consciences," "confine the intellect, and enslave the soul." Though there were in England and Wales, at the commencement of the present year, 587 chapels in adhesion to Rome, besides 21 new places of worship in course of erection, and 788 Priests exercising their vocation; in Scotland 93 chapels and 20 missionary stations; colleges in the two countries, 11, convents 51, religious houses for men, 11; yet is the Bible of power to uproot all this array, had it only free scope in the universal education of the people, and the exercise of the Christian right of individual interpretation of its teachings. This late act of Rome is simply suicidal, calculated to stimulate inquiry into her pretensions, her history, her doctrines, deeds, and spirit, and wherever that inquiry is gone into thoroughly, consequent rejection of her mummeries, and denial of her priestly claim, her assumed infallibility. Invoke would we against her stratagems and wiles, her jesuitry and craft, no other power than that of enlightened public opinion, opinion enlightened by knowledge of the law, and liberty, and spirit of Christ. Our trust is not as in one church against another, in Protestant Establishments opposing Papal Establishments; not in Queen's Supremacy as pitted against the Supremacy of Pio Nono; nor in the arm of flesh, whether wielded by a monarch or the legislature, but in that benign and all wise Providence, by which the wrath and unrighteousness, and tyranny of man are overruled for human improvement, liberty, and welfare. Our hope is in that Gospel of truth, freedom, and love, which, if received by the disciples of Christ, in the love of its all enlightening principles, its free, and equalizing, and beneficent spirit, will uproot and for ever, all priestly claims and power, come they from what quarter they may, all church

authority, be it exercised now by whom it will. The bulwark of humanity against wrong, the hope of the world, is that Religion, which is violated whenever human authority steps in to sway its sceptre over the individual mind; the Religion whose throne is the heart, whose altar the conscience, whose incense holiness of thought, purity of deed; whose priest every virtuous, upright, benevolent, God-fearing, Christ-reverencing, human-benefitting and blessing individual.

The Popish Bishop of Edinburgh, may flaunt in his sacerdotal robes, and gloat on the visioned future, when Britain, numbered amongst the things that were, and her sceptre defiled in the dust, "glorious Rome" would still be in the ascendant, but his dreams are but as those which aforetime have lit up the vain imaginations of aspirants to worldly power and splendour. The hand writing is on the wall of Babylon, the printing press is at work, no Inquisition can endungeon it, and the Bible, aided by reason and humanity, hallowing and making sacred the rebellion of mankind against all ignorance, tyranny, and priestcraft, will prove itself mighty through God to the pulling down and erasure of all the strongholds of error, spiritual iniquity, and Sin.

WORK-A-DAY HYMNS.

No. XII.

O GLORIOUS is the destiny
The world shall one day reach!
For the good and noble of all lands,
Still of the noble teach;
And the quick strong hands, and the warm brave hearts,
That battle for the right,
Still strive for the weal of man, *as man*,
For the right above the might.

For still, the enlightened and well-taught mind,
Ay longs for the beautiful;
And highest intellect like pure love,
Of truth is for ever full.

For still true Art is Nature's child,
Who takes her by the hand,
And points through her radiant universe,
The useful and the grand.

And never a social aim may spring,
Nor a social want arise;
But ever are found some truer hearts,
To meet or realise.
And the gentler spirit still *must* fling
Its light and glory forth;
And purer Faith spread her upward wing,
For a home beyond the earth.

Leicester. JOSEPH DARE.

REGISTER; RELIGIOUS AND PHILANTHROPIC.

DECEMBER 1, 1850.

WESTERN UNITARIAN CHRISTIAN UNION.—On Thursday, 17th October, the half-yearly meeting took place at Honiton. The Chapel was crowded by friends and Ministers from other Congregations in the Union, added to those of the resident Society. The introductory services were given by the Rev. W. A. Jones, M.A., Bridgewater, and the sermon preached by the Rev. J. L. Short of Bridport, Somersetshire. The members and friends of the Union were entertained by the Honiton congregation. About one hundred and twenty persons, male and female, dined together, the repast being provided at the Dolphin Hotel. The Report of the Committee was read by the Rev. W. James, of Bristol, the Secretary of the Union. One portion of the Report is specially worthy of attention:—

"Your Committee are of opinion, that the rapid increase of the Roman Catholic Church, in this country, is a subject which calls for very serious consideration on the part of the ministers and members of our congregations. Advocates of civil and religious liberty, as Unitarians have always been, they could not, of course, consistently desire that there should be the slightest interference with the freedom of any body of believers. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. But it ought to be remembered that it is the very essence of *Popery*, that it claims authority to dictate what shall be regarded as true and saving faith, and that wherever it has had the power, it has forbidden any departure from its creeds and formularies, and

visited it, when it has taken place, with the most bitter persecution, and even with death. Until within the last few years, Roman Catholics have existed among us as a people suffering the loss of civil privileges on account of their religion. They have had our sympathy in consequence, and we have struggled with them for emancipation. But all this has caused us to lose sight of the unchanging character of Romanism, and to forget how dangerous its principles are, and how much to be dreaded. It cannot be doubted that the Anglo-Catholic party, as it is called in the English Establishment, is very powerfully promoting the objects of Roman Catholicism in this country. It is very clear that its sympathies are largely with Popish doctrines and usages. It asserts a right over our consciences, and had it the power, we should not have the privilege of meeting here this day as Unitarian believers. We are prone to think, that, in an age like this, there can be no real danger of ecclesiastical domination. But there never were times, perhaps, in which sacerdotal claims were more extravagant, or in which they have been more boldly asserted, than those in which we live. And there has seldom been a period when the principles of religious freedom were more required to be fully known, and acted upon, for advancing the interests of Christianity, and for preserving the peace, and carrying forward the improvement of Society."

Mr. Brooke Herford, one of the Students at Manchester New College, has been occupied in a two month's Missionary tour in Cornwall, under the auspices of the Union. A letter to the churches, by the Rev. George Armstrong of Bristol, who had been requested by the Committee to prepare it, was read. Thanks were given to Mr. Short for his earnest and valuable Discourse.

A Tea meeting was held in the evening, very fully attended, I. J. Cox, Esq. in the chair. Thanks moved by Rev. W. A. Jones, and seconded by Mr. J. Bishop of Dorchester, were voted to Mr. Armstrong for his admirable letter, with a request to the Committee to print it in a cheap form. Addresses on various sentiments of practical moment were delivered by the Revds. Goodwyn Barmby of Lympstone and Guilliford; T. Hincks of Exeter; G. H. Stanley of Tavistock; E. Whitfield of Ilminster; W. A. Jones of Bridgwater; Charles Robberds of Sidmouth; J. L. Short of Bridport, and Mr, John Bishop. The meeting was of highest interest.

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Proposed Christian Unitarian Meeting House at Girvan, Ayrshire.—In the *Christian Pilot*, for March, p. 135—138, was inserted the statement and appeal of our friends in Girvan. That appeal was from time to time responded to by

persons in different parts of the kingdom, in a truly generous and efficient manner. The subscription appeared to be proceeding so favourably, as to warrant the Society in commencing the proposed building. Estimates were taken, and contracts formed. The building began in September, and is now ready for the roof. Most desirable is it that every thing needful to complete the undertaking should be provided, that a wall to secure the premises should be erected on three sides, with iron railing and gate in front; a Bible for the pulpit furnished; the Trust Deed, and advertising outlay included, so that the Congregation may enter their House of Prayer, free of all incumbrance. Persons disposed to aid in the accomplishment of this good work, will please forward their subscriptions as soon as possible. With great pleasure, and with the expression of sincere thankfulness on the part of the Girvan Congregation to the kind contributors, we place on record the Subscriptions already announced:—

GIRVAN.	£.	s.	d.
Mr. W. Gondie	10	0	0
H. Drynan..... ..	4	0	0
Mrs. Drynan.....	0	10	0
Mr. J. Dodd.....	2	0	0
W. Scott	2	0	0
M. Scott	2	0	0
W. Smith	0	15	0
Mrs. Smith	0	5	0
Mr. J. H. Grogan ..	0	10	0
A. Broom	0	10	0
W. Tate.....	0	10	0
S. Mc.Kee.....	0	10	0
J. Christie.....	0	5	0
J. Mc.Credie.....	0	5	0
A. Galbraith.....	6	10	0
J. Mc.Intyre.....	0	10	0
J. Mitchell	0	5	0
A. Glass.....	0	5	0
W. Mc.Credie	0	5	0
J. Ferguson	1	0	0
J. Dodd.....	0	5	0
W. Black	0	5	0
A. Henn...	0	5	0
A. Mc.Goodwin	0	5	0
D. Davidson.....	0	5	0
16 Persons 1s. each..	0	16	0
Mr. R. Kerr.....	0	5	0
J. Kerr	0	5	0
R. Kerr, Jun.	0	5	0
Scottish Unitarian Christian Association ..	5	0	0
EDINBURGH.			
Rev. R. Shaen	3	0	0
Mr. Knox	1	0	0
—— Douglass	0	10	0
Misses Combe	0	10	0

EDINBURGH,	£.	s.	d.
Mr. Watson	0	2	6
Miss Boyd.....	0	2	6
Mr. Blair	0	2	6
—— Shiels.....	0	2	6
—— Given.....	0	2	6
A Friend	0	5	0
Mr. Robert Cox	2	0	0
James Dick	1	0	9
J. Macdonald	1	0	0
J. Brown	1	0	0
J. Stephens	0	10	0
A. Scott.....	0	10	0
George Hope.....	0	10	0
John Hope	0	5	0
C. Sheriff	0	5	0
D. Greig	0	5	0
Thomas Usher.....	0	3	6
Robert Shiels	0	5	0
W. Kerr.....	0	2	6
W. Ferguson	0	2	6
John Ferguson.....	0	2	6
E. Cameron	0	2	6
—— Macintosh.....	0	2	6
Thomas Morison....	0	2	6
T. Proudfoot.....	0	2	6
James Turner	0	2	6
F. Glass.....	0	2	6
Mrs. Simpson	0	2	6
GLASGOW.			
Mr. W. Teacher	2	0	0
J. B. Anderson.....	1	10	0
T. Laidlaw	1	0	0
W. Johnstone	1	0	0
Rev. C. Clarke.....	0	10	0
Mr. H. Smeaton	0	10	0
M. Glassford.....	0	10	0

	£	s.	d.
GLASGOW.			
Mr. A. Brownlie	0	5	0
J. Failvie	0	5	0
H. Hilliard	0	5	0
J. Leck	0	5	0
W. Mc.Quaker	0	5	0
John Craig	1	0	0
PAISLEY.			
A Few Friends	1	1	10½
GREENOCK.			
A Friend	1	0	0
British and Foreign Unitarian Association.....	20	0	0
MANCHESTER.			
Mr. Ivie Mackie	20	0	0
Upper Brook Street Fellowship Fund..	5	0	0
LEWES.			
Mrs. M. Ridge.....	1	0	0
LIVERPOOL.			
Mr. R. Rathbone....	1	1	0
Mr. Robert Gladstone	5	0	0
Misses Yates	2	0	0
KNUTSFORD.			
Mr. Henry Long....	2	0	0
LANCASTER.			
Miss Thomborrow ..	0	10	0
Mrs. John Armstrong	1	0	0
LONDON.			
Mr. James Yates....	5	0	0
Mrs. Samuel Wood..	2	0	0
Rev. J. Boucher	1	0	0
DUBLIN.			
Mr. Alexander Findlater	5	0	0
CASTLE DOUGLASS.			
Mr. Ebenezer Gladstone	5	0	0
LIMERICK.			
Mr. James Todd	2	10	0
BIRMINGHAM.			
Mr. Thomas Gladstone	2	15	0
Old Meeting Fellowship Fund.....	5	0	0
Mr. Mott	0	5	0
BRISTOL.			
Mr. Matthew Dunlop	1	0	0
J. B. Estlin	1	0	0
NORWICH.			
Octagon Chapel Fellowship Fund.....	3	0	0
Mr. J. W. Dowson ..	2	0	0
Mr. Thos. Ainsworth, The Flosh near Whitehaven	10	0	0
ROYSTON.			
Miss Hester Nash ..	2	0	0
Miss Elizabeth Nash	2	0	0
LEAMINGTON.			
Misses Ainsworth ..	2	0	0
ABERDEEN.			
Dr. Dam	1	0	0
Mr. Warren	1	0	0
—— Mackintosh	0	10	0
Mrs. Paterson	0	2	6
Rev. D. Griffith	0	2	6
Mr. Duncan	0	2	6
8 Friends 1s. each ..	0	8	0
NOTTINGHAM.			
Fellowship Fund	3	0	0
BELFAST			
Rev. W. Bruce	0	10	0
GIRVAN.			
Mr. William Goudie, (Second Sub.)....	3	0	0

OBITUARY.—August 8, at Glasgow, aged 72, Mrs. William Morison. Few persons have striven more earnestly and perseveringly to cultivate the understanding than this excellent individual. Naturally blessed with strong and clear perceptive faculties, she devoted her powers to the search after Religious truth, and in what to many would have proved adverse circumstances, attained, as she believed, the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. That truth, in the midst of popular odium and misrepresentation she faithfully professed. Amongst the earliest members of the Christian Unitarian Church in Glasgow, she adhered to the faith she found peace and joy in believing, through ill report and good report. In that faith she rejoiced; that faith she laboured to diffuse; that faith she adorned by attention and fidelity in business, by devotedness to domestic duties, by Christian zeal and exemplariness of life. Her family affections were warm, her friendships sincere and ardent; her attendance on the institutions of the Gospel faithful. For her advanced years she enjoyed comparatively good health, till within a week of her decease, and departed this life without pain, sustained by strong faith in God through Jesus Christ, and full of hope of a blessed immortality.

TO THE READERS OF THE CHRISTIAN PILOT.

The want experienced in many sections of the community, and frequently expressed in various circles, of a lower priced Periodical, than any then existing, devoted to the maintenance of the principles of Christian truth, freedom, and righteousness, as held by Unitarians, conjoined with his own convictions of the necessity for such publication, and urgent requests from many quarters, that he should undertake it, led the Editor two years ago to commence "*The Christian Pilot, and Gospel Moralist.*" From long previous experience in conducting "*The Christian Pioneer,*" as also from his connection with "*The Christian Reflector*" anterior to that, he knew well the difficulties and discouragements accompanying this kind of labour. Difficulties and discouragements he has never been accustomed to take much account of, provided the object aimed at were good, and right, and Christian. He could not witness the gross ignorance pervading the masses of Society, in relation to the pure, simple, and beneficent principles of the Gospel of truth, freedom, and love; the ecclesiastical and priestly assumptions put forth on the one side, and the reactionary Infidelity as the consequence of both these causes on the other; superstition and bigotry bowing down and degrading the soul to the dust in one quarter, and worldliness and indifference corrupting and searing it on the right hand and the left, and doubt in this particular the rectitude of the object, nor the duty of a willing disciple of the Reformer and Saviour of the world, in relation to it. He engaged, therefore, in the work, in the confident hope and expectation that others, like-minded, would cheer his efforts by their co-operation, and render the task less onerous by their combined literary assistance.

Nor has he been disappointed. Most gratefully he acknowledges the efficient, and zealous, and continuous disinterested aid of several Friends and Brethren, whose papers stamped an immediate as well as permanent value on this Periodical. They enabled him to accomplish one purpose, at least, he had in view, that of rendering "*The Christian Pilot*" a work, not of mere ephemeral character, but from whose pages instruction might be derived, in coming years, on many subjects of vital interest to the improvement and happiness, the freedom and blessedness of humanity. Such aid was the more welcome and honourable, inasmuch as it was voluntary, consonant with the intention and spirit of the Editor, which was not to derive pecuniary profit as

from a literary speculation, but to produce a work whose aim should be to disseminate Christian truth, expose religious error, remove ignorance and prejudice, encourage serious Scriptural inquiry, and win souls to Christ, to virtue, and to God.

If ever there were a period, or a Country, in which such efforts were imperatively demanded, ours is that country, and the present the time. Never was Priestcraft more rampant in its claims, Infidelity more widely diffused, Mammon more worshipped. A cold, cheerless, heartless, cynical, material, anti-social philosophy, has spread its meshes of sophistry through the foundations of Society, and thousands on thousands, uneducated, half-informed, or previously mentally prejudiced and enslaved, mistaking its sciolism for wisdom, and its licentiousness for liberty, and its pretensions for knowledge, and its averments for facts, and its promises for realities, are entangled in its wiles. How can they understand, know, and adopt the truth, unless some one should guide them? How be led to detect the sophistry which blinds, or abandon the unbelief which blights the soul, or abjure the glittering phantoms which bewilder but to betray, or perceive and reject the error and the folly, the iniquity and madness of anti-class, and anti-social asperities and savagery, which induce the sourness of misanthropical feeling and isolation, and set every man against his fellow-man, unless knowledge be spread abroad, unless Christianity in its simplicity and purity be disclosed to the jaundiced vision, which now looking on the religion of Jesus only as a jumbled and tangled mass of priestly artifice and cant, delusion and oppression, would then behold it in very truth, as the voice of reason uttering its teachings by the authority of God, and those teachings revealing the Fatherhood of the Infinite One, and the brotherhood of humankind, imparting a directory for life, and guiding onwards and upwards through obedience to its enlightened and benevolent commandments and spirit, to eternity of bliss.

On the Unitarian denomination is this work and labour of love pre-eminently obligatory. Shall the obligation be discharged, or neglected, or altogether repudiated? Shall Unitarians content themselves with the utterance of the apothegm, "Truth is mighty and it will prevail," and fold their arms, and give themselves up to day-dreaming, and listless inactivity? Shall they devote their attentions and furnish a literary melange only for middle class, or higher circle readers, careless of the poor, the maimed, the halt, and the blind in intellect? Shall they do

this, while all around the surges of error, and ignorance, and superstition, and sin, are curling their crests on high, and swelling over and submerging all rational thought, all freedom, inspiring principle and action, all simple, heartfelt devotion to the Father Spirit? Multitudinous are the publications, their name is legion, spreading through the length and breadth of the land, filled with statements, whose tendency is to debase and pollute, to create a demoniac anger against class and party, and alienate one portion of the community from the other, which pander to the craving for the horrible, and unlock the mysteries of vice to the polluted imaginations which gloat over their abominations. The result of the diffusion of such publications, unless checked and counteracted by other and holier agency, cannot but be dreadful, destructive to individual improvement, uprooting all true perception of right and wrong, blasting all love of the noble, the pure, the holy, and ending in the degradation and desolation of the social fabric.

To arrest these evils, to counteract the mischief of these publications, calls for strenuous effort, and a cheaper publication even than that of "*The Christian Pilot.*" Such an effort must emamate from an Association, not from an individual. It should be the undertaking of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, or, better still, the united contributions of a number of persons should constitute a Fund, out of which all needful outlay should be provided, a competent and responsible Editor engaged, literary assistance paid, and an extensive Agency instituted, extending its ramifications into every district and town in the United Kingdom. Experience has shown the Writer, and more especially his two last years' experience, that many London Booksellers are comparatively careless about low priced publications, and as many instances not only careless, but absolutely inimical to their circulation, placing all sorts of obstacles in their way, and oftentimes denying the existence of the inquired for work, or else returning the answers, "None in Town," "Not out." There must be an instrumentality framed, by which, independently of the Bookseller, diffusion may be insured. "*The Sunday School Penny Magazine*" has obtained a circulation of 5,000 copies mainly through such methods. A work similar in form to that of "*The Lamp,*" devoted to Romanism; or "*Chambers's Journal,*" but consecrated to the higher and holier objects which have been indicated in these remarks, and at the cost of a penny or three-halfpence, and issued weekly, would be emphatically a "*Tract for the*

Times," and might be made productive of incalculable public good.

Believing that such a Work is that which the condition of Society, and the state of public feeling and sentiment imperatively require, the Editor closes with the present Number the publication of the *Christian Pilot.* The anxieties attendant on conducting periodical publications he has now sustained for a quarter of a Century. He gives way to others to buckle on the harness. The physical as well as mental labour accompanying such efforts in the cause of Religious Reformation, he has willingly encountered, upheld by the desire of being useful in his day and generation, and of bearing testimony to as wide an extent as possible to the all holy, and benignant, and blessed principles of Christian truth, freedom, and righteousness. He trusts, from the many expressions of thankfulness he has from time to time received, from parties personally known, as well as unknown to him, that good has been effected through those labours. Such, at any rate, has always been his aim. Ever will he retain, respectful, cordial, grateful remembrances of the Coadjutors in his labours, many now called to their reward on high.

In unabated conviction of the truth and Divinity of the Religion of Christ, its power to enlighten, console, stimulate to all excellence; to render all time holy; to hallow the thoughts, sanctify the affections, and enable its practical disciple to pass rejoicingly and trustfully through the discipline of life, and prepare, by unswerving adherence to, and consistent faithful practice of the true and the right, for the blessedness of immortality; with assured confidence that, notwithstanding the errors and aberrations, the tyranny and craft, the superstition and servility, the prejudices and ignorance yet too wide spread, the Religion of Jesus will eventually uproot all evil under the sun, and unite in one common brotherhood of peace and good will, the now divided and jarring children of men; in thankfulness to the Infinite Father, who has mercifully blessed him with health, and strength, and purpose, and endeavour to carry forward for so long a period. Publications designed to further the true and acceptable worship of God through Christ Jesus, and thereby to promote His undivided honour and glory among his fellow creatures; and with fervent good wishes and prayers for the ever increasing happiness of the friends of Christian truth, and their attainment of the highest and holiest well being, in this world, and for ever, the Editor now bids the readers of the *Christian Pilot,* FAREWELL.

Woodbine Place, Windmill Hills,
Gateshead-on-Tyne.

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